

personal standing goes, Hutch, my job is to do my job. I'm going to do it the way I think is necessary. I'm going to set a vision. I will lead, and we'll just let the chips fall where they may.

**Prime Minister Ahern.** Romano.

**President Prodi.** Somebody in the back—nobody in the back.

**President Bush.** You look like a nice fellow. I don't know why they don't call on you. [Laughter]

### Successor to President Prodi

**Q. Taoiseach,** could I ask you to confirm that the Portuguese Prime Minister Barrosa has emerged as the likely successor to Mr. Prodi, and if you'll be proposing his name next Tuesday night as you're meeting with the foreign ministers?

**Prime Minister Ahern.** When I go back to Dublin this evening, I have to talk to still about half of my colleagues, which I hope to do that between about 5 o'clock and 9 o'clock tonight. I also have to talk to Jose Manuel Barrosa, the present Prime Minister of Portugal. But we do hope, sincerely hope, that I would be in a position to both have the meeting and to make a recommendation and get a positive decision on Tuesday evening.

**President Bush.** Thanks, *Taoiseach*. We've got to go to Turkey.

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:14 p.m. at Dromoland Castle. The President met with Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland, in his capacity as President of the European Council, and President Romano Prodi of the European Commission. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Prime Minister Ayad al-Alawi of the Iraqi interim government; U.S. Special Envoy for Northern Ireland Mitchell B. Reiss; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; senior Al Qaida associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Mary McAleese of Ireland. Prime Minister Ahern referred to Deputy Prime Minister Mary Harney and Minister of Foreign Affairs Brian Cowen of Ireland.

### Statement on United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

June 26, 2004

Today, on United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, the United States reaffirms its commitment to the worldwide elimination of torture. The nonnegotiable demands of human dignity must be protected without reference to race, gender, creed, or nationality. Freedom from torture is an inalienable human right, and we are committed to building a world where human rights are respected and protected by the rule of law.

To help fulfill this commitment, the United States has joined 135 other nations in ratifying the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. America stands against and will not tolerate torture. We will investigate and prosecute all acts of torture and undertake to prevent other cruel and unusual punishment in all territory under our jurisdiction. American personnel are required to comply with all U.S. laws, including the United States Constitution, Federal statutes, including statutes prohibiting torture, and our treaty obligations with respect to the treatment of all detainees.

The United States also remains steadfastly committed to upholding the Geneva Conventions, which have been the bedrock of protection in armed conflict for more than 50 years. These conventions provide important protections designed to reduce human suffering in armed conflict. We expect other nations to treat our service members and civilians in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. Our Armed Forces are committed to complying with them and to holding accountable those in our military who do not.

The American people were horrified by the abuse of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. These acts were wrong. They were inconsistent with our policies and our values as a Nation. I have directed a full accounting for the abuse of the Abu Ghraib detainees, and investigations are underway to review detention operations in Iraq and elsewhere.

It is often American men and women in uniform who fight for the freedom of others

from tyrannical regimes that routinely use torture to oppress their citizens. From Nazi Germany to Bosnia and Afghanistan to Iraq, American service members have fought to remove brutal leaders who torture and massacre. It is the American people and their contributions that have helped to rebuild these traumatized nations to give former victims hope.

A little over a year ago, American service members and our coalition partners freed the Iraqi people from a dictatorship that routinely tortured and executed innocent citizens because of what they believed in or what ethnic or religious group they came from. In torture chambers, innocent Iraqis were brutalized and the bodies of the dead left in mass graves. Throughout the past year, Americans have assisted the Iraqi people in establishing institutions to ensure accountability so that such acts do not occur again and to help victims recover.

Despite international efforts to protect human rights around the world, repressive regimes continue to victimize people through torture. The victims often feel forgotten, but we will not forget them. America supports accountability and treatment centers for torture victims. We contribute to the U.N. Fund for the Victims of Torture and support the work of nongovernmental organizations to end torture and assist the victims. We also provide protection, counseling, and where necessary and possible, relocation in the United States. We stand with the victims to seek their healing and recovery and urge all nations to join us in these efforts to restore the dignity of every person affected by torture.

These times of increasing terror challenge the world. Terror organizations challenge our comfort and our principles. The United States will continue to take seriously the need to question terrorists who have information that can save lives. But we will not compromise the rule of law or the values and principles that make us strong. Torture is wrong no matter where it occurs, and the United States will continue to lead the fight to eliminate it everywhere.

## **Proclamation 7799—National HIV Testing Day, 2004**

*June 26, 2004*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Every day, 8,000 lives are lost in the global AIDS pandemic. In our country, nearly 1 million people are infected with HIV, and approximately 40,000 more contract it each year. National HIV Testing Day is an opportunity for Americans to increase their awareness of this terrible disease and to get tested for HIV/AIDS. By working together to end this pandemic, our Nation's citizens contribute to a brighter future for themselves and for people around the world.

New drugs and new treatments are bringing hope and enhancing the quality of life for those who are affected by HIV/AIDS. However, these advances can only help individuals if they know their HIV status. The National HIV Testing Day theme, "It's better to know," highlights the importance of education in helping people make healthy decisions about preventing and treating HIV/AIDS. Approximately one-quarter of people who are HIV positive do not know that they are carriers. Without knowing their status, they cannot get the treatment they need and may unknowingly spread new infections. Today, testing is easier than ever. It is imperative that those at risk for HIV/AIDS get tested.

To reach out to HIV/AIDS sufferers in need, I recently announced \$20 million in immediate new funding to deliver lifesaving drugs to Americans who are awaiting them. I have proposed in my 2005 budget to spend more than \$17 billion here at home to expand prevention efforts such as regular testing and abstinence education, care and treatment, and research efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. In addition, this budget proposal doubles funding for abstinence-only programs, because abstinence is the only sure way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases. My Administration is working through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Advancing HIV Prevention initiative to encourage routine testing as a normal part of health care.